



City of Seattle

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Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor  
**Department of Planning and Development**  
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF**  
**THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Application Number:** 2402309  
**Applicant Name :** Seattle School District Number One  
**Address of Proposal:** 4925 Corson Avenue South, Maple Elementary School

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Master Use Permit for future construction of a single-story, 15,900 sq. ft. addition to an existing public school (Maple Elementary) and renovation of 4,256 sq. ft. of the existing school building. The project includes on-site parking for 28 vehicles. The project also includes demolition of existing portable classroom structures on the site. An Environmental Impact Statement and Addendum thereto were prepared by the Seattle School District.

The following approval is required:

**SEPA** - To approve, condition or deny pursuant to Seattle's SEPA policies. Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code. (DNS prepared by Seattle Public Schools)

The following Development Standard Departure is requested:

To allow less than the required additional on-site parking. – SMC 23.45.122.D – (Required 58 additional parking stalls, Proposed 28.)

**SEPA DETERMINATION:**      ☐ Exempt   ☐ DNS   ☐ MDNS   ☒ EIS\*  
  
   ☐ DNS with conditions  
  
   ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or  
   another agency with jurisdiction.

\* Environmental Documents and SEPA Threshold Decision done by Seattle School District Number One.

## **BACKGROUND DATA**

### Site and Vicinity Description

The proposal site is the site of the current Maple Elementary School between Corson Avenue South and Interstate 5, located between the cross streets of South Ferdinand Street and South Pearl Street, in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle. Maple is located in an area of single family residences, SF 5000 zoning; the current school has been in operation since the early 1970s. The site is wedge-shaped and generally slopes gradually from north to south. Single family homes are developed across Corson Avenue to the east of the school, and a single home exists opposite South Pearl Street to the south. The existing Maple Wood Playfield is adjacent to the north of the school property.

### Proposal Description

As part of the Building Excellence II Program, the Seattle School District proposes to demolish seven existing on-site portable structures and construct a new 15,900 square foot building to the south of the existing Maple Elementary school. The new building is to include a child care program, food preparation kitchen, combined gymnasium/cafeteria, performance stage, classrooms, and support spaces. The proposed project also includes renovation of the existing school gymnasium into three classrooms. No expansion of the school site is proposed.

The Addendum to the EIS discloses that the new facility is designed to accommodate up to 430 to 450 students in the school. The number of teachers, staff, and volunteers is expected to be approximately 40 to 50 people. This represents no change in student or staff capacity.

The current configuration includes an on-site staff parking lot along the eastern portion of the site and no on-site bus loading. The proposed new site configuration would maintain the on-site parking for 28 vehicles and provide a new service drop-off for the new addition. Bus loading areas would be maintained on Corson Avenue South.

The campus is designed to meet Seattle School District educational standards. This includes the opportunity to open the gymnasium, cafeteria, and stage for community use at times when school is not in session.

### Public Comments

A public meeting of the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee ("Committee") was held on July 15, 2004 at which public comment was received. Two members from the public attended the meeting, in addition to the Committee members and project professionals. Discussion centered on the request for a departure from the code-required number of 58 total on-site parking stalls. Public attendees asked a few general information questions about the hours of use of the proposed turnaround lane and the planned improvements to Corson Avenue South.

The SEPA comment period ran from July 29, 2004 to August 12, 2004. No comments were received.

### **ANALYSIS - Development Standard Departure**

This Development Standard Departure process is being conducted pursuant to the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code sections 23.79.002-.012. Pursuant to these provisions an Advisory Committee was convened, public comment received, and a written recommendation to the Director of DPD made. This analysis and decision is made pursuant to the requirements of SMC section 23.79.010 that the Director determine the amount of departure to be allowed as well as mitigation measures to be imposed. Criteria set forth in the applicable code sections are to be used for both the Committee's recommendation and the Director's decision.

#### **Criteria for Review**

Section SMC 23.79.008 states that departures shall be evaluated for consistency with the general objectives and intent of the City's Land Use Code, including the rezone evaluation criteria in Chapter 23.34 of the Seattle Municipal Code, to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings. In reaching recommendations, the advisory committee shall consider and balance the interrelationships among the following factors:

- A. Relationship to Surrounding Areas: The advisory committee shall evaluate the acceptable or necessary level of departure according to:
  - (1) Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area;
  - (2) Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale;
  - (3) Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;
  - (4) Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and
  - (5) Impacts on housing and open space.

More flexibility in the development standards may be allowed if the impacts on the surrounding community are anticipated to be negligible or are reduced by mitigation; whereas, a minimal amount or no departure from development standards may be allowed if the anticipated impacts are significant and cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

- B. Need for departure: The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area. Greater departures may be allowed for special facilities, such as a gymnasium, which are unique and/or integral and necessary part of the educational process; whereas, a lesser or no departure may be granted for a facility which can be accommodated within the established development standards.

#### **Relationship to Surrounding Area**

##### **To Allow Less than Required On-Site Parking**

The proposed building and remodel would reconfigure the existing parking area south of the main entrance to the school off Corson Avenue South to accommodate two new ADA accessible parking stalls, rather than the three vehicles it now accommodates. The proposed project would also add a new turnaround lane in front of the main entrance to the school off Corson Avenue to allow before-school

and after-school access to the new building, and access for service and delivery vehicles; this lane would eliminate three existing parking stalls located south of the existing school entrance that are currently reserved for custodial staff. No other on-site parking now exists or is proposed to be created.

As noted above in the project description, the student and staff population is not expected to be increased. Based on City of Seattle code, the new gymnasium/cafeteria space would require 58 total on-site parking locations. The EIS Addendum discloses information from an on-street parking study conducted for the District by Heffron Transportation Inc. in May 2004. Using City of Seattle Standards, the study found 206 legal on-street parking spaces within 400 feet walking distance of the school available during the evening, and 90% of these spaces are legally available during the school day. Measured parking usage in the area averaged 33% utilization in the day and 29% utilization in the evening. According to these statistics, an average of 138 stalls would be available during the day within 400 feet of the school.

The Development Standard Departure Committee voted unanimously 8-0 to grant the departure request. Based on the above considerations and the favorable Committee recommendation, it is reasonable to conclude that an existing tolerable parking situation will continue in a similar manner if the requested parking departure is granted.

### **DECISION - DESIGN DEPARTURE**

1. *To Allow Less than Required On-Site Parking.* **Granted.**

### **ANALYSIS - SEPA**

Environmental impacts of the proposal have been analyzed in environmental documents prepared by Seattle School District Number One. These include a July 6, 2004 Addendum to the EIS with specific information on the Maple School project, Building Excellence Phase II Capital Improvement Program, Draft, Final and Addendum Supplemental and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements dated July 11, 2000, September 1, 2000 and November 7, 2000, respectively, and a May 19, 2004 Heffron Transportation Parking Impact Analysis study.

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) section 25.05.660 provides that proposals can be conditioned or denied in order to mitigate environmental impacts. All conditions must be related to impacts identified in the environmental documents, based on adopted policies, be reasonable and capable of being accomplished. This proposal is reviewed under that substantive SEPA authority.

Disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental documents listed above. This information, supplemental information provided by the applicant (plans, written descriptions of the project, environmental documents, parking study), and the experience of this agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and conditioning.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) establishes the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for specific elements of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states in part:

"where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation (subject to some limitations)."

Under certain limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

### Short-Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from demolition and building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust caused by construction activities; potential soil erosion and potential disturbance to subsurface soils during grading, excavation, and general site work; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; conflict with normal pedestrian movement adjacent to the site; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Due to the temporary nature and limited scope of these impacts, they are not considered significant (SMC 25.05.794). Although not significant, these impacts are adverse and, in some cases, mitigation is warranted.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: Stormwater, Grading, and Drainage Control Code (grading, site excavation, and soil erosion); Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, removal of debris, and obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way); the Building Code (construction measures in general); and the Noise Ordinance (construction noise). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate short-term impacts to the environment and, with the exception of noise impacts, they will be sufficient without conditioning pursuant to SEPA policies. Further discussion of short term noise, air quality, traffic and parking related impacts follows.

### Noise

There will be some grading required to prepare the building site as well as other noise generating construction activities. Noise associated with construction of the building could adversely affect the residential areas in the vicinity of the proposal site. Due to the proximity of residentially zoned areas in relation to the proposal site, the limitations of the Noise Ordinance appear to be inadequate to protect the residential neighborhood. To minimize construction noise impacts to residential neighborhoods, DPD has conditioned projects of a similar scale to limit hours of construction to 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and to 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. This condition has been successfully applied in the past and will be imposed here.

The Department recognizes there may be occasions when critical construction activities of an emergency nature, related to safety or traffic issues, or which could substantially shorten the total construction timeframe, may need to be completed after regular construction hours as conditioned herein. Therefore, the Department reserves the right to approve waivers of this construction hours restriction. Such waivers must be approved by the Department on a case-by-case basis prior to such work.

It is also recognized that there are quiet non-construction activities that can be done at any time such as, but not limited to, site security, surveillance, monitoring for weather protection, checking tarps, surveying, landscaping, painting, and walking on and around the site and structure. These types of activities are not considered construction and will not be limited by the conditions imposed on this Master Use Permit.

In addition, after the building is fully enclosed, on a floor-by-floor basis, interior work may be done at any time in compliance with the Noise Ordinance with no pre-approval from the Department.

### Construction Traffic

The applicant estimates that less than 1,000 cubic yards of material will be either removed from or imported to the site. Deliveries of other construction materials are also to be expected during the course of construction. Movement of this amount of material is expected to require as many as 100 truck trips. The remainder of the construction materials used will be delivered by hundreds more trucks.

As a result of these trips, a negative impact, unmitigated by existing codes and regulations, will be introduced to surrounding streets and intersections. It is recognized that in order to limit this negative impact as much as possible it is necessary to require a DPD-approved Truck Trip Plan which regulates the routes trucks carrying project-related materials will take so as to limit area impacts as much as possible and the times during which they may travel sufficiently to avoid causing any unacceptable deterioration of intersection levels of service. A further condition must require that this Truck Trip Plan be followed at all times. As so conditioned, the adverse impacts of construction traffic are adequately mitigated.

### Parking

Construction workers can be expected to arrive at the site in private vehicles. Construction related vehicles will be driven to the site and left for periods of time. Except for summer work, construction of the proposed school addition would take place while the school is in operation. As there is limited on-site parking space (approximately 30 stalls) that will be shared by construction workers and staff, depending on the phase of the work, a majority of the construction workers and staff will be expected to park on neighboring streets. As teachers and staff will primarily be using the main building entrance, teachers and staff are expected to park on streets to the north of South Shelton Street. Construction workers can reasonably be expected to park south of South Shelton Street as those spaces are nearest the construction entrance.

As disclosed in the EIS Addendum, weekday on-street parking within 400 feet of the school averaged 33% utilization of 206 total spaces, thus leaving approximately 138 available spaces. These measurements were made while school was in session and include faculty and staff-generated parking demand. The projected availability of 138 spaces, together with additional parking spaces outside the 400 foot boundary of measurement, indicates that there will be on-street capacity to accommodate construction worker and school staff vehicle parking during the construction phase. Thus, no mitigation of construction-related parking impacts is warranted.

### Air Quality

Demolition, grading and construction activities each may create adverse air quality impacts in the surrounding area. The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (“PSCAA”) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. A PSCAA permit is required for the removal of hazardous materials such as asbestos. The Seattle Stormwater, Grading and Pollution Control Ordinance regulates on-site grading activities and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of the work.

Existing regulation is sufficient to control short-term air quality impacts. In order to be certain that PSCAA reviews the proposed demolition it is necessary to file a Notice of Intent to Demolish with that agency. A condition of this MUP will be to file a PSCAA notice prior to demolition.

### Long-Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated from the proposal and include: increased traffic and increased parking demand; possible increase in light and glare; increased bulk and scale on the site; increased ambient noise due to increased human activity; increased demand on public services and utilities; increased energy consumption; and decreased air quality. These long-term impacts are not considered significant because the impacts are minor in scope.

Because the proposal is to replace existing classroom and program space now contained in portable structures and to provide new common spaces without an appreciable increase in student, faculty, or staff size, the long-term impacts of the proposal are expected to be limited.

### Traffic and Parking

The proposal is to demolish existing portable structures on the site and replace their functions in the new building and remodeled portion of Maple Elementary School is not expected to increase the student or staff population. By code, the construction of a new gymnasium/cafeteria space in the new addition will increase the on-site parking requirement to 58 spaces. Based upon the results of the Heffron Transportation Parking Impact Analysis study from July 19, 2004, and the recommendation of the Development Standard Departure Committee noted above, the impact of on-site parking is expected to be minimal on the surrounding neighborhood.

### Historic Resources

The Seattle School District nominated Maple Elementary School to be a Seattle Historic Landmark; the nomination was denied on June 20, 2002, for not meeting the criteria for designation. For this reason, the proposed demolition and modification of the existing structures is concluded not to be an impact to historic resources.

### Other Impacts

Several adopted codes, ordinances, and agencies will appropriately mitigate the other use-related adverse impacts created by the proposal. Specifically, these are the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (airborne emissions); the Seattle Land Use Code (increased light and glare from new lighting of the parking), and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption).

The other impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes, ordinances, or conditions (increased ambient noise, increased pedestrian traffic, increased demand on public services (in addition to police services and utilities) are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by conditions.

No SEPA conditioning of long-term impacts of the proposed action is warranted.

### **CONDITIONS - SEPA**

#### **Prior To Construction Or Grading Permit Issuance**

1. The Owner and/or other responsible parties shall submit to DPD for review and approval a finalized Truck Trip Plan which delineates the circulation routes that trucks carrying project-related materials will take and the hours they may travel so as to minimize negative traffic impacts on nearby properties, streets and intersections.
2. File a Notice of Intent to Demolish with PSCAA.

#### **During Construction**

The following condition(s) to be enforced during construction shall be posted at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way. If more than one street abuts the site, conditions shall be posted at each street. The conditions will be affixed to placards prepared by DPD. The placards will be issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other weatherproofing material and shall remain in place for the duration of construction.

3. The hours of exterior demolition and construction shall be limited to weekdays between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on non-holiday weekdays and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Once each floor has been fully enclosed, interior construction may occur at any time in compliance with the Noise Ordinance. The Department reserves the right to allow waivers of this restriction on a case by case basis, where such work can be shown to be of an emergency nature, necessitated by safety or street use (traffic) concerns, or which would substantially shorten the overall construction time frame. Prior approval must be obtained from DPD for such work.
4. Follow the terms and conditions of the DPD approved Truck Route Plan.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: February 10, 2005  
Scott Kemp, Senior Land Use Planner